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OCI No. 2654/65

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WEEKLY REPORT**THE SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM**

State Department review completed

6 January 1965

OSD review(s) completed.

**INTELLIGENCE AND REPORTING SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE INTERAGENCY
VIETNAM COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

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OCI No. 2654/65

Published by the Directorate of Intelligence
Central Intelligence Agency

THE SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM
(31 December 1964 - 6 January 1965)

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THE WEEK IN PERSPECTIVE

The Huong government, after earlier assertions that it was prepared to force a showdown with the military over its authority, now has worked out a compromise formula with armed forces leaders. The formula calls for both sides to issue a declaration to the effect that full authority rests with the civil government, and that early national assembly elections are planned. The settlement also provides for the release to the government of High National Council members arrested by the military, but the references to a national assembly would sidestep any question of restoring the Council.

This formula, while permitting both parties to proceed on the basis of the military's fait accompli against the Council, may do little more than paper over the challenge to the government's authority. A newly created military "liaison" or public relations committee headed by General Ky, the Air Force chief, may serve as a vehicle for continued military involvement in politics. This committee is described by Ky as having the purpose of trying to resolve differences between the government and its Buddhist, student and political opponents.

Buddhists and students renewed anti-government activity during the week, although there have been no serious disturbances thus far. Buddhist leader Tri Quang reportedly is indicating that his campaign to force Premier Huong's removal may be broadened to include Chief of State Suu as well. Tri Quang is threatening in any case to make a major issue of a government decree legalizing the rival General Buddhist Association.

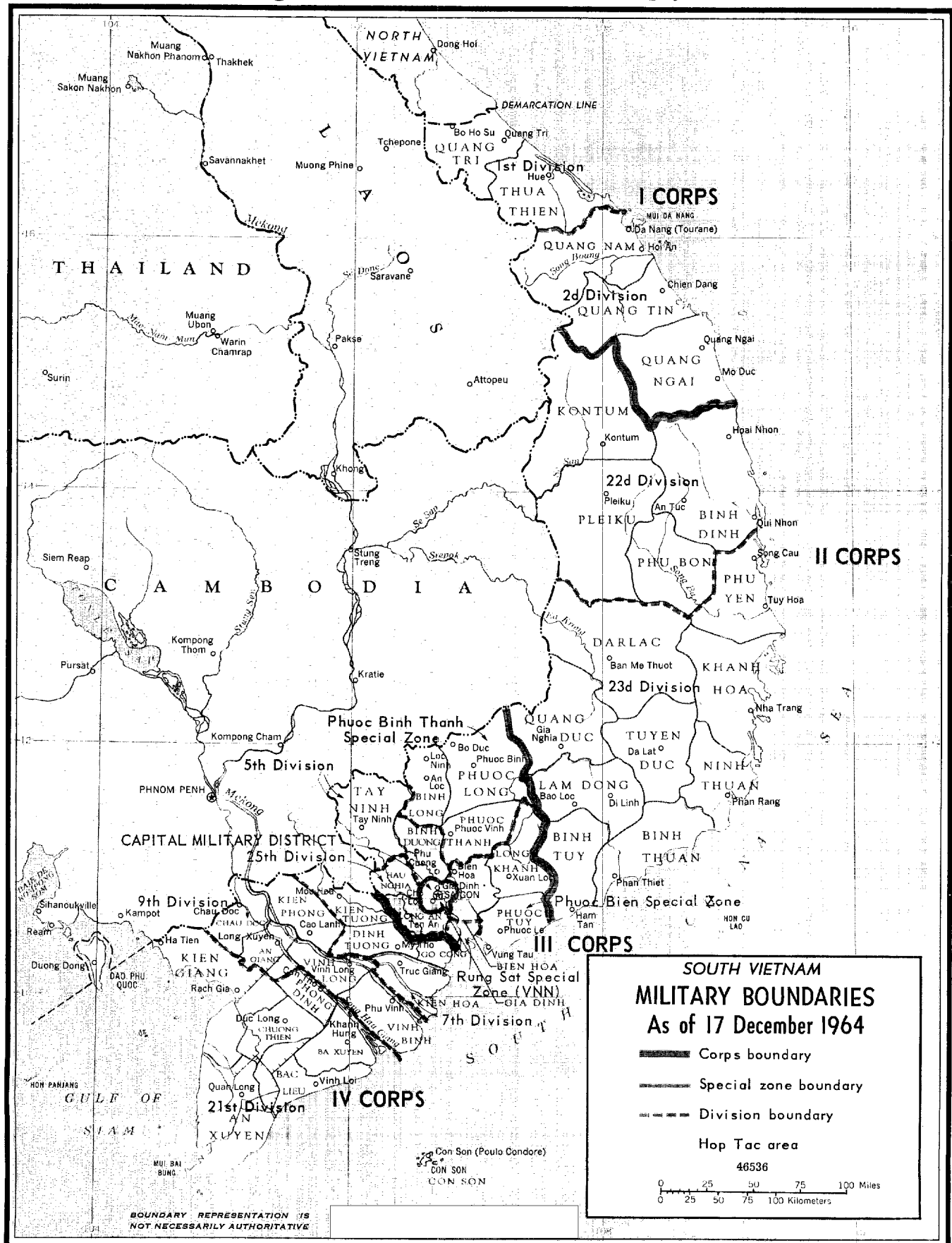
The Viet Cong continue to maintain pressure throughout the country. There appears to be some

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increased emphasis on the delta region. The intensity and number of Viet Cong incidents are expected to remain at about the present level for the next week or two, and may intensify just before the Tet holiday. The success of the Binh Gia action may encourage the Communists to attempt similar actions elsewhere.

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I. SITUATION WITHIN SOUTH VIETNAM

A. POLITICAL SITUATION

1. The political crisis over the relationship of the Huong government and the military remains fluid, but there now are signs that a compromise agreement has been reached and may be announced shortly. The government, which over the weekend had declared itself ready for a formal showdown with General Khanh and the military, abandoned this position on 5 January saying it had learned that armed forces leaders wanted a detente.

On 6 January, a deputy of Premier Huong told Deputy Ambassador Johnson that a formula had been worked out which was confirmed later in the day at a meeting of the ad hoc committee of deputies of the US Mission, the government and the military. This formula includes a formal joint declaration by the government and the military that full power had been restored to civilian authorities by the military, and that early national assembly elections were being prepared. The issue of re-establishing the deposed High National Council apparently would be finessed, under the formula, but its currently detained members would be unconditionally released to the government. [REDACTED]

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Vice Premier Oanh, who reported this information, implied but did not explicitly state that the formula had military agreement. He added that Chief of State Suu hoped to hold a "tea party" to smooth over relations of the government, the military, and the US, but seemed to agree with Johnson's suggestion that any idea of a formal exchange of apologies be dropped. Johnson also warned of the danger of new disruptions in the period prior to elections, arising either from the unclear status of the government or from the opportunities for the Viet Cong and other elements to exploit the proposed elections themselves. There is little question, however, that the proposed formula accords with the general tendency of Premier Huong and other government leaders throughout the crisis to find some

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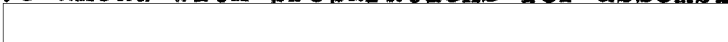
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face-saving means of accepting the military's fait accompli in abolishing the High National Council, rather than try to force the military to undo their action by restoring the original constitutional basis of the government.

2. The temporary stiffening of Premier Huong's attitude over the weekend may have been a gamble that he might, in forcing a showdown, have been able to generate pressure which, with US backing, would bring about Khanh's removal as commander-in-chief. He and Interior Minister Vien had told Ambassador Taylor that they were determined to confront the military because Khanh had stiffened his demands by proposing what would amount to a de facto military coup. Huong said that the generals had demanded the creation of a military control organ to operate at or above the chief-of-state level. He said the government would make it clear that the military must either accept civilian supremacy or seize power openly. He told Ambassador Taylor at one point that he remained convinced that Khanh and the Buddhists were plotting to neutralize South Vietnam, and said the problem between the government and the armed forces could only be solved by getting rid of Khanh.

According to Huong, General Khanh shied away from the scheduled government-military confrontation meeting. Khanh let it be known through navy commander Admiral Cang that the military were discarding the idea of a control organ and preferred to move ahead with preparations for assembly elections.



3. Meanwhile the military, by a decree Khanh issued on 29 December, has established what Air Force chief General Ky calls a "military liaison" or public relations committee set up under the Armed Forces Council. Ky, named to head the committee, insists that it is not a device to take control, but is intended to try to mediate differences between the government and its opponents, such as the Buddhists and students. Ky claims he hopes to get pledges of support for the government

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[REDACTED]

through meetings with leaders of these groups, but that his committee would, if developments warranted, take firmer action against them.

A number of other generals had been reportedly proposing various successor committees to the High National Council to advise or guide Chief of State Suu, and it remains possible, despite Ky's disclaimers, that his military committee could become a type of control organ. Ky noted past Buddhist interest in the army's initial offer to mediate disputes when it dissolved the HNC, and asserted that his committee would actually provide the government a welcome "face-saving" way out of its present troubles. [REDACTED]

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4. A brief flurry of coup rumors were reported during the weekend, primarily from Catholic circles including Huong's minister of state, Pham Van Toan. Toan claimed that he had long expected such a military move, and even asked the Embassy about possible asylum for Suu and Huong. [REDACTED] While some rash move against the government or against Khanh now seems less likely, coup plotting cannot be ruled out. The rumors may have spread, however, to muddy the waters or reinforce Huong's temporary talk of the need for a showdown. There has been little evidence to suggest any military coup preparations, and no independent substantiation of the rumors.

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5. Buddhist leader Tri Quang and one of his militant spokesmen told Embassy officers on 1 January that, while they intended to pursue moderate tactics in view of the political crisis, they would keep up their campaign to effect Premier Huong's ouster. At that time Quang indicated that he hoped the HNC would be reconstituted so that it might take the step of replacing Huong legally, but he gave only vague indications of what he would consider a more satisfactory government. More recently, Quang is reported to have stated that the Buddhist campaign would be expanded to include Chief of State Suu as a target. On 4 January he said he would make a major issue of a government decree giving legal status to the rival General

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Buddhist Association. Tri Quang said he is prepared to go as far as necessary, including renewed self-immolations, to secure Huong's removal.

Saigon Buddhist leader Tam Chau on 2 January exhorted some 2,000 followers at services at the Buddhist Institute to struggle against the government, which he now terms illegal as a result of dissolution of the High National Council, and to demand the release of arrested students and other Buddhists. About 300 monks held a 24-hour hunger strike in Saigon against the government on 4 January, and there have been some pro-Buddhist, anti-government popular strikes in northern provinces.

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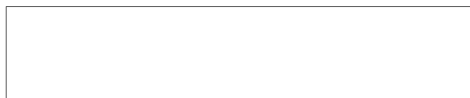


Although there are some indications of continued rivalry between Quang and Chau, both leaders are espousing similar themes. The Embassy believes the Buddhists have concluded that they now can exploit the military's action to their advantage in seeking Huong's removal.

6. Anti-government student activity also stepped up during the week. Students in Hue began a school boycott late last week, and have been holding a series of anti-government gatherings in support of the Buddhist opposition to Huong. On 4 January they began a hunger strike, and have threatened to move into a "violent stage" if Huong is not removed. Similar trouble may be developing in Da Nang. In Saigon on 4 January, a large student demonstration, ultimately reaching over 1,000 protested the scheduled trial of previously arrested demonstrators, and forced its cancellation. So far little violence has erupted from the student agitation, but there have been growing undertones of anti-American sentiment, presumably in reaction to US support for Huong.

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Buddhist leaders have publicly denied sponsoring the student demonstrations, and in some cases have acted to disperse them. The students in Saigon, however, may have responded directly to Tam Chau's exhortations. Although actual Buddhist control over student groups continues uncertain,

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Buddhist leaders probably feel they can use the students to put more direct pressure on the government and the US while themselves maintaining a posture of some restraint.

7. American personnel were the targets of suspected Viet Cong terrorism in three separate instances on 1 January in the Saigon area. Sniper fire was directed at a group of US servicemen water-skiing on the outskirts of Saigon. An explosive device was thrown at a US naval officer on a motorbike near the scene of the firing. A grenade exploded in the front parking area of a house occupied by a US employee. The naval officer sustained minor injuries. The assailants in each case escaped.

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8. Nineteen South Vietnamese nationals have been arrested in connection with the Christmas Eve bombing of the Brink BOQ in Saigon. In addition, police in nearby Dinh Tuong Province are investigating a lead, furnished by a surrendered Viet Cong, that a Communist sabotage cell there was responsible for the Brink bombing.

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Economic Situation

9. The GVN has approved the principle of funding pacification programs directly to province chiefs rather than through the individual GVN ministries. This procedure, recommended by the US Mission, should expedite the implementation of pacification activities.

10. The GVN has also approved the calendar 1965 budget of 46.6 billion piasters. The US mission council will concentrate on budget review in the spring to keep the budget within this figure and reduce the inflationary impact of the anticipated large deficit.

11. The retail price of rice has remained steady while the wholesale price has declined. Rice is not yet arriving from the delta in quantity, and Saigon is being supplied from nearby provinces. This results from the fact that the government has still not acted to compensate the ramasseurs--who buy the



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rice in the delta--for their losses on sales to the government stockpile. These losses were to have been recouped by profits on rice exports, but the GVN has issued no export permits. The government has also not yet set official prices for rice. As a result, banks are withholding credits to the ramasseurs for purchase of the new harvest.

12. The dredge at Da Nang is working three shifts a day, six days a week, to clear the harbor, badly silted by Typhoon Joan. Congestion is so bad shippers are threatening an embargo unless they can be assured of faster unloading.

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B. MILITARY SITUATION

1. Overall Viet Cong activity last week continued at a rate above the 1964 weekly average of 550 incidents, with the Binh Gia battle highlighting the week (see Annex for details). Total Viet Cong incidents (584) were slightly below the previous week's level; decreases reported by I and II Corps were almost offset by a substantial increase in IV Corps.

Most of the Communist activity was of low intensity and consisted of terrorism and harassments. There were several incidents of unopposed hamlet entry in Darlac Province, resulting in considerable loss of weapons. Aside from the Phuoc Tuy Province action, a Viet Cong company overran an ARVN bivouac area about five miles northwest of Ben Cat in Binh Duong Province. This attack resulted in 26 killed, including two US advisers, 31 wounded and a like number missing. Another Viet Cong company attacked an outpost in Long An Province on 27 December. A second outpost was attacked simultaneously. These two attacks--probably a coordinated battalion-size operation--resulted in friendly losses of 16 killed, 4 wounded, and 15 missing, and the loss of 38 weapons.

Communist activity in IV Corps has begun to rise again, after a short drop-off, with an increased number of attacks and ambushes reported. The southernmost 21st Division area was the most active zone. Viet Cong activity in IV Corps resulted in minor VC losses and very heavy casualties and weapon losses to ARVN.

A Viet Cong captured near Can Tho on 17 December said Military Region (MR) 9 Headquarters had issued an edict that the political side of the struggle is to be emphasized in that region. Viet Cong military forces reportedly have been directed to demonstrate their strength by taking and holding small sections of territory for varying periods, ranging from 24 hours to 5-7 days depending on the size and character of the Communist force. If the report is true, occasions when the Viet Cong will stand and fight may become more frequent, at least in MR 9.

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2. The preoccupation with politics on the part of senior ARVN officers at the higher levels of command continues at some expense to the pursuit of the war effort. This was reflected in the fact that major ground operations again decreased, as did the member making contact with the enemy.

Major ARVN attention was devoted to the recapture of Binh Gia east of Saigon, but the Province of Ba Xuyen in the delta was the scene of a highly productive search-and-destroy operation. The operation, supported by tactical air, resulted in 82 Viet Cong killed, the capture of many Viet Cong documents, and large quantities of weapons and munitions, including several heavy weapons. In this operation, a ChiCom copy of a Soviet anti-tank weapon not previously known to be in the Viet Cong weapon inventory was taken.

3. Government losses increased substantially this week; personnel casualties totalled 1,092 (350 KIA) compared to 641 (172 KIA) last week. Viet Cong casualties decreased slightly to 457 (324 KIA) from 465 (401 KIA) last week. Government weapons losses doubled to 614 from the 305 reported last week. Communist weapon losses remained about the same--117 weapons compared to 124 last week.



C. PACIFICATION

1. Results of pacification efforts continue to vary from area to area. On balance there has been little or no significant progress on a nationwide basis.

2. In the I Corps area, the 1965 pacification plan has been approved by the corps commander. This plan is divided into four three-month phases which started on 1 January. Phase 1 in each province of the corps zone will be along Highway 1. This is an apparent effort to clear and keep open this vital communication link throughout the corps area of responsibility. In succeeding phases the province chiefs will determine which areas will receive attention. The potential for confusion and wasted effort is manifest unless these independent actions are closely monitored and at least partially coordinated by the Corps.

3. Diversion of ARVN strength to the Hop Tac area is hindering the pacification effort in the II Corps zone. In Binh Dinh Province, the sector adviser asserts that the pacification effort will be halted unless ARVN units in the province are restored to control of the province chief. Reevaluation of hamlets in Khanh Hoa Province reveals a decrease in the number of hamlets considered to be completed. The decrease is due to a combination of Viet Cong activity and flood damage. The chief of this province has requested authorization to form three new Regional Forces companies. To date, he has received only one company of a promised battalion from the 23d division.

4. Pacification efforts in several provinces of III Corps are being hampered by the failure of Saigon to authorize the formation of Regional Force units in those districts where there is little or no ARVN presence. Security conditions, according to MACV, have deteriorated seriously in Phuoc Long Province as well as Phuoc Tuy Province.

5. No significant pacification progress was made in the IV Corps zone. The 9th and 21st divisions



have organized inspection teams to verify whether hamlets reported as completed in their areas actually meet the six-point criteria.

6. In the Hop Tac area, senior commanders remain preoccupied with politics rather than the pacification effort. The action at Binh Gia, just outside the Hop Tac area, drained III Corps reserves and has probably affected the total number of battalions available for the Hop Tac operation. Securing and clearing operations were unaffected, however, with the same number of battalions committed, eight and nine, respectively.

Twenty-seven more hamlets were declared completed, and the total of completed hamlets now stands at 279. The population in secured areas rose to 710,000.

For the second consecutive week Long An reports the largest number of Viet Cong incidents in the III Corps area. The most significant action was a series of attacks and harassments in the southernmost district of the province, which taken together probably amounted to a battalion-size operation.

South Vietnam's Hop Tac commander states that satisfactory progress has been made throughout the Hop Tac area, even though all objectives in the securing zones of Binh Duong, Gia Dinh, and Long An have not been met. He says Zone B has been effectively cleared of organized Viet Cong forces. A recommended new phase line will be established to encompass areas now beyond those included in the originally defined Zone B.



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II. THIRD COUNTRY DEVELOPMENTS

A. CAMBODIA

1. South Vietnamese relations with Cambodia were relatively quiescent this week. On 30 December Sihanouk, answering questions from a Hong Kong news service, said that Cambodian diplomatic recognition of the DRV and the NFLSV will not take place now but can be effected at the appropriate time. [REDACTED]

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B. FRANCE

1. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] said he had been told by a French deputy, General Billotte, that De Gaulle would react favorably to a US effort to solve the Vietnamese crisis along the following lines: an international conference convened to approve a new nationalist government, excluding the Viet Cong and the NFLSV but organized on a platform of a negotiated peace and a non-aligned foreign policy. The conference, [REDACTED] told a US Embassy officer in Paris, would also guarantee South Vietnam's neutrality. The proposal envisages that US troops would be withdrawn only after the North Vietnamese withdrew support and the Viet Cong formations disbanded. [REDACTED]

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2. [REDACTED] also said the NFLSV is preparing to set up a rival government in South Vietnam, perhaps in February, and that Sihanouk's "Indochinese People's Conference" will push toward the NFLSV goal. [REDACTED]

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C. INDIA

1. Indian Prime Minister Shastri said in a 4 January AP interview that the US should seek an international conference--specifically a Geneva conference--on South Vietnam, and not press for a military decision.



III. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BLOC

A. USSR

1. Soviet propaganda support for Vietnamese Communists continued with a 30 December promise by the Soviet Foreign Ministry of assistance to the North in case of US attack and a pledge of full support for the efforts of the NFLSV in the South.

Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko, in response to a letter from the DRV Foreign Ministry to the Geneva co-chairmen, repeated earlier Soviet warnings that "the USSR will not stand indifferent to the fate of a fraternal socialist country and is prepared to render the necessary assistance should the aggressors dare encroach on (DRV) independence."

2. The Soviets also agreed to permit the NFLSV to open a permanent office in Moscow early in 1965

B. COMMUNIST CHINA

1. The Peiping People's Daily on 6 January characterized the week-long battle of Binh Gia as evidence that the Viet Cong has progressed from "a guerrilla force to a formidable liberation army capable of wiping out...whole battalions of enemy troops...equipped with the most up-to-date American arms." The editorial predicted other similar victories in 1965.

2. Neither Hanoi nor the Liberation News Agency has made such a claim as yet, but it is probably only a matter of time.



ANNEX

BINH GIA -- AN APPRAISAL

The seizure and retention of Binh Gia and the surrounding area for more than 18 hours by the Viet Cong, in the face of piecemeal but repeated ARVN dislodgement efforts, is the most significant feature of the engagement. Otherwise the Binh Gia operation was typical of Viet Cong tactics--the initial attack, followed by the ambush of relief forces. The entire battle was a series of such encounters.

At 0630 on 28 December, a large Viet Cong force occupied Binh Gia, a town of about 6,000 predominantly northern Catholics in Phuoc Tuy Province, against only minor resistance. Shortly thereafter, ARVN launched a counteroffensive to recapture the town. The initial reaction force advanced to within 300 yards of the town, where it was stopped by an estimated enemy battalion; the friendly force then withdrew after suffering only minor casualties.

On 29 December, ARVN reinforced the area with additional battalions and attacked the Viet Cong, now estimated at two battalions, on the outskirts of Binh Gia. This attack was also repulsed and one friendly company was overrun by the Viet Cong. By 2000, ARVN had gained only the western third of the town and all units were then ordered to hold present positions. During the helilift in this phase, three UH-1Bs were shot down.

At 0330 on 30 December, one Ranger battalion was heavily engaged by the Viet Cong north of the town. By dawn, the enemy broke off the engagement and withdrew southward from Binh Gia. At about 1200, friendly forces reoccupied Binh Gia without making contact.

A fourth American helicopter was shot down on 30 December with the loss of all hands. On the following day, an ARVN Marine company sent to recover the bodies from the downed aircraft was ambushed by the waiting Communists. Despite the

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reinforcement of a Marine battalion, two companies were overrun and suffered extremely heavy casualties in the afternoon-long battle.

During the lull of 1-2 January, additional ARVN units conducted sweeps of the general area without contacting the enemy. On 3 January, however, a friendly armored column was ambushed about 1.5 miles southwest of Binh Gia, and received many casualties. Two personnel carriers and a tank were destroyed by enemy recoilless rifle fire. As of 6 January, no further major engagement had been reported in the Binh Gia area.

Incomplete casualty figures reported to date:

<u>Friendly:</u>	201 KIA (includes 5 US)
	192 WIA (includes 8 US)
	68 MIA (includes 3 US)
Total	461 (16 US)

Viet Cong: 132 KIA (32 confirmed)

Forces engaged:

<u>Friendly:</u>	30th Ranger Bn (-) 2 Co Originally Committed
	38th Ranger Bn
	33rd Ranger Bn
	4th Marine Bn
	1st ABN Bn
	3rd ABN Bn
	35th Ranger Bn (-)
	7th ABN Bn
	1 Plat 155's
	1 Plat 105
	1 Sect Tanks M24

Total number of troops committed approximately 4,300. A total of 57 armed UH-1B and 67 unarmed UH-1Bs supported the operation. Thirty sorties were also flown in support by conventional aircraft.

<u>Viet Cong:</u>	1 Bn C56 Regt
	2 Bn C58 Regt
	1 Bn C58 Regt (possible)
	1 Co and 5 Plats local force (unconfirmed)

ARVN estimates that a total of about 1,800 Viet Cong were committed.

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[REDACTED]

It is considered significant that elements of the C56 and C58 Viet Cong regiments, previously deployed in Tay Ninh and Binh Duong provinces to protect the Central Office north of Saigon, were involved in this engagement. It probably reflects Viet Cong confidence that the remaining forces could safeguard the main headquarters, and possibly indicates increased strength in that area.

It seems probable that the Binh Gia action reflects a Viet Cong plan to draw ARVN strength away from the Hop Tac area west and north of Saigon, and to demonstrate strength in an area that had been relatively inactive. Communist tactics were carefully designed to capitalize on known ARVN tactical weaknesses in order to inflict maximum damage on ARVN forces initially drawn into the area, but at the same time, to permit rapid withdrawal before ARVN could build up a preponderance of force. ARVN's piecemeal commitment of forces considerably facilitated this Communist tactic and directly contributed to their piecemeal defeat.

It is also significant that the Viet Cong prolonged the engagement in strength for as long as they did. Their success in this operation, similar to but on a larger scale than the engagements at Ap Bac (January 1963), Chuong Thien (April 1964), and An Lao (December 1964) may lead them to conduct further such actions throughout the country. ARVN will be hard pressed to find sufficient reserves to react constantly to similar Viet Cong actions, without pulling troops from pacification and security missions in which case the Viet Cong are certain to exploit the void.

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CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

28 Dec 64 0630 - VC captured and occupied Binh Gia.

1030 - ARVN Sector launched attack from west on Binh Gia with 2 Ranger Co reaction force helilifted into area. Supported by A-1E and A-1H aircraft and armed UH-1B. Artillery did not support, as hamlet out of range.

Reaction force moved to within 300 meters, where stopped by estimated VC Bn.

1830 - Reaction force withdrew to Duc Thanh district hq 2 km west Binh Gia. Phuoc Bien Special Zone took control of ops.

29 Dec 64 Hq and one Co of 30th Ranger Bn helilifted to Duc Than district hq - 2 miles west Binh Gia.

30th Ranger Bn attacked Binh Gia from west and made contact with estimated reinforced VC Bn.

1100 - 30th Ranger Bn reached edge of Binh Gia and stopped by VC. VC now estimated at 2 Bn.

1300 - Two Co's 33rd Ranger Bn conducted heliborne assault on Binh Gia. One Co reached the edge of hamlet. The second Co was attacked and overrun by VC.

1430 - Remainder 33rd Ranger Bn landed farther to west and supported secured lodgement in center of hamlet by close air strikes and UH-1B.

By nightfall, 30th Ranger Bn captured western third of hamlet.

2000 - All units ordered to hold positions.

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During 28th and 29th, 30 A-1E/A-1H sorties and 57 armed UH-1B sorties supported the operations. 67 transport UH-1B provided lift for the ARVN.

30 Dec 64

0330 - 33rd Ranger Bn heavily engaged by VC who were covering their withdrawal. A-1E and flareship supported ARVN force.

Dawn - VC broke off engagement.

0930 - One Co 4th Marine Bn committed to attack on Binh Gia.

1100 - Remainder 4th Marine Bn committed.

1210 - 4th Marine Bn linked up with 33rd Ranger Bn at center Binh Gia and swept the town from east to west without contact.

1350 - Residents Binh Gia came out of houses.

1600 - 33rd Ranger Bn relieved by 4th Marine Bn. A-1E struck VC elements withdrawing south and southeast.

1830 - UH-1B with 4 US aboard shot down in an insecure area - 2 km SE Binh Gia.

31 Dec 64

0700 - One Co 4th Marine Bn moved out to where UH-1B had crashed previous evening, approximately 2 km SE Binh Gia.

1200 - Co engaged by heavy VC attack and withdrew 1 km towards Binh Gia. Joined by 2nd Co 4th Marine Bn.

1515 - Remainder of Bn linked up with the 2 companies vicinity crash site and established defensive perimeter to cover evacuation of casualties.

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1755 - VC attacked the Bn from north and SE. Supported by accurate 81 mm mortar and 57 mm RR fire. Two of Marine companies overrun. UH-1B suppressive fire received but did not deter VC. The remaining 2 Co's broke out and returned to Binh Gia.

1 Jan 65

0545 - One Plat 105 mm how helilifted into area approximately 3 km SW Binh Gia to support subsequent 1st and 3rd ABN ops.

0620 - Commenced landing 1st ABN about 3 km ESE Binh Gia, followed by lift of 3rd ABN into general vicinity.

0840 - 1st Bn completed landing and proceeded to objective about 2 km south of Binh Gia.

0915 - 3rd Bn completed landing and proceeded to objective about 1 km east of 1st ABN objective.

0930 - A truck convoy proceeding north of Binh Gia with the 38th Ranger Bn (-), escorted by tanks, hit road block about 15 km SW Binh Gia. With air support, block reduced in 30 minutes and column proceeded to Binh Gia.

1330 - Both 1st and 3rd ABN on objectives without meeting resistance.

2 Jan 65

1630 - 7th ABN helilifted from Bien Hoa to ops area.

1800 - 7th ABN reached vicinity - 9 km S Binh Gia with negative results.

1800 - Task Force Charlie consisting of 1 M113 Troop, 1 Tk Plat, 1 Co 35th Ranger Bn and Hq 35th Ranger Bn moved NE along highway to point 10 km SE Binh Gia with negative results.

1st and 3rd ABN and 4th Marine Bn remained in perimeter centered about 2 km SE of Binh Gia and conducted search

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in area where the 4th Marine Bn was attacked on the 30th (Helo crash site).

30th Ranger Bn (-) and 33rd Ranger Bn (-) remained vicinity Binh Gia.

One Plat 155's, 1 Plat 105's, a section of tanks and the Hq Co 35th Bn remained vicinity of the III Corps advanced CP, about 13 km SSW Binh Gia.

On the night of 2nd, infra-red mission indicated possible Viet Cong concentration about 7 km S of Binh Gia.

3 Jan 65

1st and 3rd ABN conducted sweep from their overnight positions to area 8 km SSW Binh Gia. Results negative.

7th ABN conducted a sweep 8-9 km SSW Binh Gia with negative results.

30th and 33rd Ranger Bn moved S along highway from the district hq (2 km W of Binh Gia) to an area about 10 km SW Binh Gia where they linked up with Task Force Charlie composed of the 1 M13 Troop, 1 Tk Plat, 1 Co 35th Ranger Bn and Hq 35th Ranger Bn.

TF Charlie then moved north along road toward Binh Gia, meeting heavy resistance about 7 km SW Binh Gia. Unit supported by artillery moved south about 4 km after the engagement. Heavy personnel and material casualties incurred by this TF.

4th Marines sent patrols to area 2-3 km S Binh Gia where they received sporadic VC fire.


4 Jan 65

The 3rd ABN conducted road clearing and search-and-destroy operations in an area 5-10 km SW of Binh Gia. Results negative.

-A-7-

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30th Ranger Bn secured highway from point 6 km SW Binh Gia to Binh Gia.

TF Charlie secured the highway an additional 5 km to the southwest.

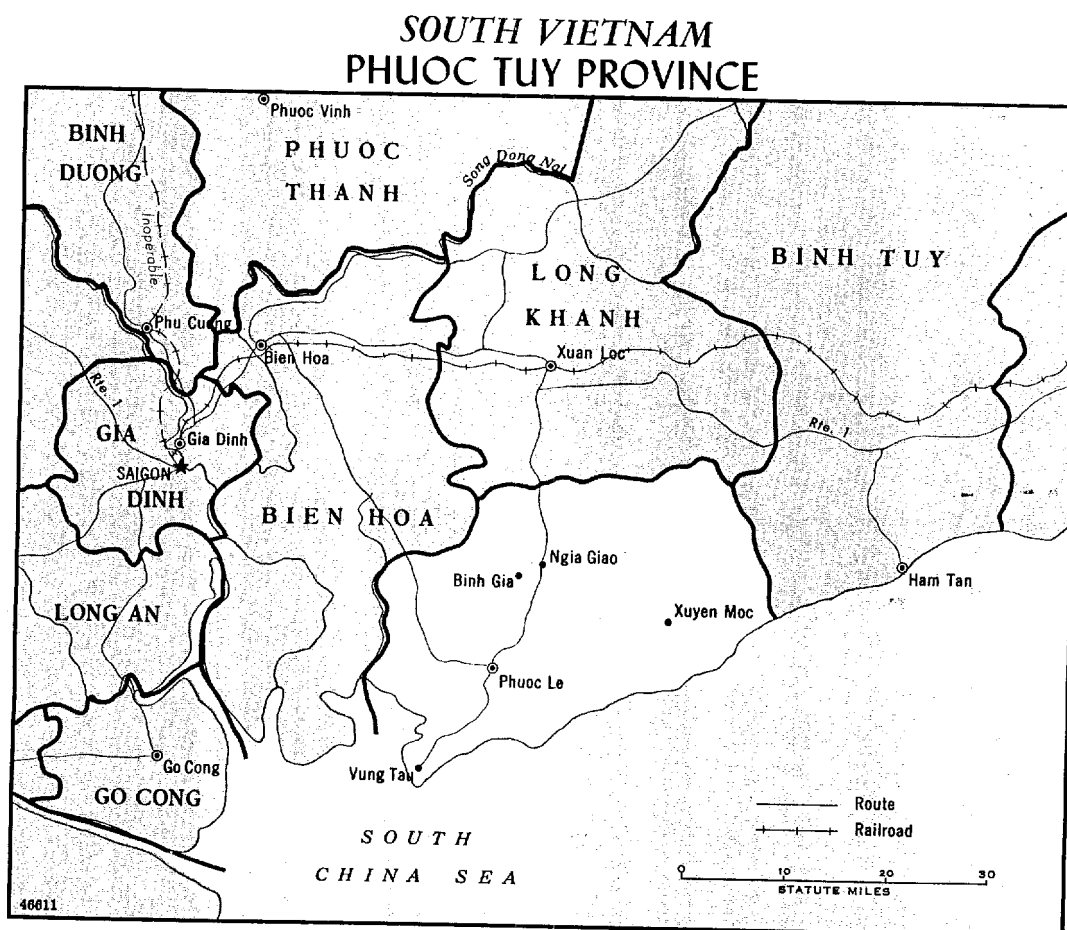
One Co, 35th Ranger Bn (RFC) received sniper fire in area about 12 km SSW of Binh Gia. No casualties.

33rd Ranger Bn and 4th Marine Bn remained in vicinity Binh Gia overnight.

Only light contact was made by all ARVN units throughout the day.

-A-8-


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